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ABSTRACT

The present report summarizes the major findings of the Personal Values Project being conducted at the University of Minnesota for the past six years. A number of studies have been completed dealing with various groups of individuals in diverse organizational settings (managers, educational administrators, union leaders and naval officers). These studies clearly show that personal values are both measureable and important to measure. Values are related to such practical and important concerns as decision making, managerial success and organizational context differences. This review of the findings also raises a number of questions which still need to be answered in this area. For example, at individual levels, it is not known how value systems develop and change as a result of one's organizational experiences. At the level of an organization, the question of "optimal mix of values" of its members needs studying. It is hoped that future research efforts would be directed towards these and other such questions. [A seventeen-item list of references is included.] (Author)

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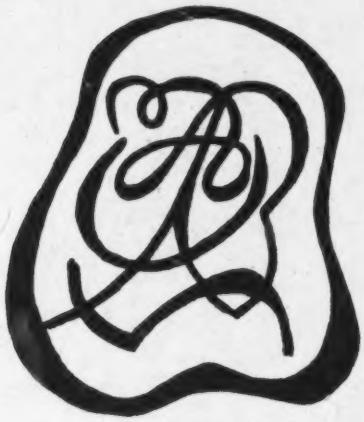

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PERSONAL VALUE SYSTEMS OF MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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During the past six years, several of us at the Industrial Relations Center have developed an approach to the study of personal value systems of managers and administrators.[1] To date we have assessed the values of: (a) 3,000 managers from the U.S.A., Japan, Korea, India and Australia; (b) 500 U.S. college students; (c) 200 U.S. educational administrators; (d) 300 U.S. Naval officers; and (e) 136 U.S. labor leaders. While we have published a number of journal articles, research monographs and technical reports on our approach and findings, it seems appropriate to present a brief summary of our approach, results and possible implications of this work. We are undoubtedly biased toward overestimating the importance of our work but have made a sincere effort to be realistic. What have we really found and what does it all mean?

Rationale for the Studies

A framework was developed to delineate the relationship of values to behavior for managers and was subsequently utilized in the development of a measurement approach to personal value systems that (1) was responsive to relevant theoretical and definitional notions of contemporary value theory, (2) was designed in light of the characteristics of the group being studied (managers), and (3) was clearly cognizant of the primary importance of the behavioral relevance and significance of values.

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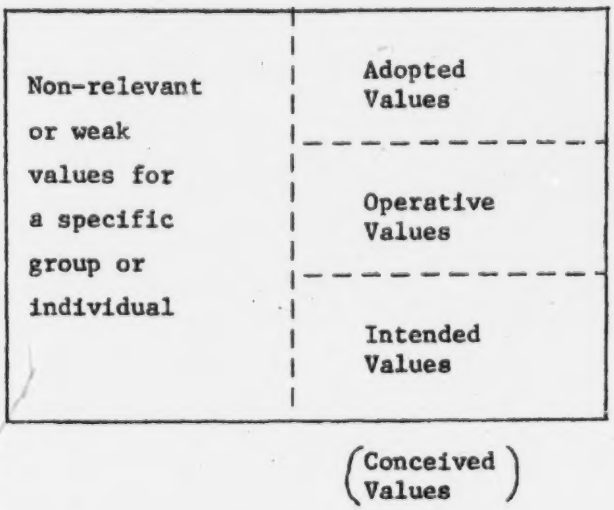
1. Those most directly involved in these studies have been N. C. Agarwal, O. P. Dhingra, R. E. Henderson, T. J. Keaveny, K. D. Kim, R. Koike, R. Lee, K. A. Olsen, D. W. Oxnam, N. R. Rydel, R. E. Trerise and M. L. Weber.

Several major classes of overlapping values are recognized in the framework. All possible values which might be held by an individual or by a specific group constitute the total value space and are known as potential values. The potential values are made up of two classes of values: non-relevant or weak values for a specific group or individual (those which would have little or no impact on behavior) and conceived values (those which are likely to be translated from the intentional state into behavior). Conceived values are made up of operative values (those which have a relatively high probability of being translated from the intentional state into actual behavior, intended values (those which are viewed as important but may have only a moderate probability of being translated from the intentional state into behavior because of situational factors), and adopted values (those which are less a part of the personality structure of the individual and affect behavior largely because of situational factors).

Potential Values



The development of the Personal Values Questionnaire (PVQ) was based on the rationale that the meanings attached by an individual to a carefully specified set

of concepts will provide a useful description of his personal value system, which may in turn be related to his behavior in systematic ways. This attempt to describe an individual's values through the use of a carefully specified set of concepts was influenced by the work of Charles Osgood and his associates and represents an adaptation of their methodology.

In order to specify a set of concepts relevant to the personal value systems of managers, a pool of 200 concepts was selected from literature dealing with organizations and with individual and group behavior. In addition, ideological and philosophical concepts were included to represent major belief systems. A panel of expert judges reduced this pool to a set of 96 concepts, which was further reduced to 66 concepts based on pilot studies. To provide a framework within which respondents could conveniently evaluate each concept, the concepts were categorized into five classes: goals of business organizations, personal goals of individuals, groups of people and institutions, ideas associated with people, and ideas about general topics.

In the PVQ for managers, four scales are used to represent two modes of valuation. Since the general value of an object or idea to an individual is thought to be largely a function of its degree of importance to him, the primary or power mode of valuation utilized is the importance scale, which consists of three points -- high, average, and low. Because of the emphasis on the behavioral effect of values, it was deemed necessary to make operational the theoretical distinction between the intentionality of values and their translation into behavior (operative values from among conceived values). To the extent that it is possible to determine a consistent rationale as to why an individual or a specific group thinks certain concepts are important or unimportant, one has a reasonable basis for distinguishing operative from among conceived values. In this process, three secondary modes of valuation were developed from the literature. The pragmatic mode of

valuation suggests that an individual has an evaluative framework that is primarily guided by success-failure considerations; will a certain course of action work or not, how successful or unsuccessful is it apt to be. The pragmatic mode of valuation runs throughout much of the literature dealing with managers and finds support in various analyses of the Allport-Vernon Study of Values which suggest a major dimension of values as being "pragmatic and utilitarian" or the finding of a major value factor being "idealism vs. practicality".

The ethical-moral mode of valuation implies an evaluative framework consisting of ethical considerations influencing behavior toward actions and decisions which are judged to be "right" and away from those judged to be "wrong". The existence of a moralistic-ethical orientation is at the very heart of most religious belief systems and is supported by analyses of the Study of Values which find value dimensions or factors such as "social and altruistic" and "idealism".

The affect or feeling mode of valuation suggests an evaluative framework which is guided by hedonism; one behaves in ways that increase pleasure and decrease pain. The affective component of values has an extensive philosophical and psychological background and seemed important to include as an orientation in the present studies.

In the PVQ, the pragmatic mode of valuation is represented by a "successful" scale; the ethical-moral mode of valuation is obtained through a "right" scale; and the affect or feeling mode of valuation is measured through use of a "pleasant" scale.

A combination of primary and secondary modes of valuation was thought to be a better behavioral predictor than would either mode alone. For example, if Manager A is generally pragmatically oriented (i.e., concepts which were important to him were also seen as being successful as opposed to right or pleasant), his behavior would be predicted best by viewing it as a joint function of those concepts he thought were important and successful. In a more general sense, what is being suggested is

that an individual's behavior (insofar as it is influenced by his personal values) is best explained by utilizing both those things he considers important and his personal primary orientation. Symbolically, one could say:

$$B_v \longrightarrow f(I \cap PO)_c$$

This expression would be read: the behavior of an individual, insofar as behavior is a function of values, is best indicated by the joint function of those concepts he considers important and which fit his primary orientation. For a pragmatically oriented individual, behavior is best indicated by those concepts considered important and successful; for a morally-ethically oriented individual, behavior is best predicted by those concepts considered important and right; while for an affect oriented individual, behavior is best predicted by those concepts considered important and pleasant.

This, then, is the general rationale for the studies reported. Our starting point is the individual manager in a work organization; our interest is in his values and what they tell us about his work behavior and outcomes of this behavior. We are not studying organizations, industries, nations or cultures although each manager in our studies certainly can be placed within these broader frames of reference. It is apparent, however, that we must aggregate the individual results to focus on many questions of interest.

Summary of Study Results

1. There are large individual differences in personal values within every group we have studied. Among managers in each country, for example, some have a pragmatic orientation (they view ideas and concepts in terms of whether or not they work or are successful), some have an ethical-moral orientation (they view ideas in terms of being right or wrong), while some have an affect or feeling orientation (they view ideas in terms of whether or not they are pleasant). Some managers have

a very small set of values while others have a large set and seem to be influenced by many strongly held values. The important values of some managers include concepts which are almost solely related to their organizational life while other managers include a wide range of personal and philosophical concepts among their important values. Some managers have what might be termed individualistic values as opposed to group-oriented values. Some managers are highly achievement-oriented as opposed to others who value status and position more highly. Finally, it is clear that some managers have a personal value system that might be characterized as "hard". Their important values include concepts such as Ambition, Obedience, Aggressiveness, Achievement, Success, Competition, Risk and Force. Other managers have value systems that are often characterized as "soft" and include such concepts as Loyalty, Trust, Cooperation, Compassion, Tolerance, Employee Welfare, Social Welfare and Religion. Personal value systems, then, are like most other human characteristics; individuals differ greatly with respect to them.

2. Personal value systems of managers are relatively <u>stable</u> and do not change rapidly. In 1966, we measured the personal value systems of a national sample of U.S. managers. In 1972, Professors Edward Lusk and Bruce Oliver of the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School repeated our earlier study on a comparable national sample of U.S. managers. They reasoned that the widespread airing of environmental and social issues (e.g., pollution, the Vietnam War, life style changes, changing expectation of the labor force, and minority and disadvantaged group employment problems) between 1966 and 1972 would be accompanied by changes in the value systems of managers. The differences between the value systems of the 1966 sample and the 1972 sample of managers were very small. Over all 66 concepts in the value instrument, the average difference in value importance was only 3.3 percentage points between the two time periods. A difference of ten per cent or greater between the two samples was found on only four of the 66 concepts. The

1972 sample placed greater value on the concepts (dignity, trust and change) and lower value on the concept (my boss) as compared to the 1966 sample. These results show quite clearly that the personal value systems of 1972 managers are very similar to those of 1966 managers. Personal value systems of managerial groups do not change rapidly even during periods of environmental and social flux. A probable explanation for this stability would involve the nature of the selection and developmental process managers go through, the requirements and constraints that the job of managing places upon managers and the fact that personal values are a relatively stable human characteristic.

3. Personal value systems of managers are related to and/or influence the way managers behave on the job. While several of our studies show this to be the case, the clearest evidence emerges in the study of Indian managers. Here we assessed the personal values of each manager and measured his behavior on five job incidents, each representing a typical problem which a manager might encounter in the performance of his job. Prior to analyzing the data, we made 25 predictions about how managers with certain values would be expected to behave. Examples of these predictions are: (a) managers who have profit maximization as an important goal will be less willing to spend money on cafeteria and rest room facility improvements than will managers who do not have profit maximization as an important value, (b) managers for whom compassion is an important value would be less willing to obtain research and development funds by depriving employees of part of a potential wage increase than would managers for whom compassion is not an important value, and (c) managers for whom cooperation is an important value would promote individual B to be their assistant more than would managers for whom cooperation is not an important value given the following choices --

> Individual A is a very creative man who has been constantly making suggestions for improvement in office procedures. Although all his

ideas are not practical ones, you have in the past, adopted some of his suggestions. A is sincere and hard working, and he can be very helpful to others if he is asked for his help. He is, however, not a very popular man in the department, because other employees do not like procedural changes and extra pressures which they think are unnecessary at times.

Individual B, equally efficient as A, is not a man of ideas. He, on the other hand, is a very congenial and well liked person. He goes out of the way to help others whenever they have problems and is definitely contributing to the good morale of your department. He enjoys the reputation of a kind man.

Across all five incidents, 19 out of 25 predictions are supported by the data. These results offer strong support for the contention that values are related to behavior in meaningful ways for managers. The fact that the relationships exist within a sample of managers from many different organizations all across India and from managers with varied organizational and personal backgrounds is clear evidence of the role of personal values in influencing problem solving and decision making behavior. Personal values are certainly important in understanding and predicting the behavior of managers.

4. Personal value systems of managers are related to their career success as managers. We defined career success or personal success in terms of managerial pay relative to the manager's age in our studies of American, Japanese, Indian and Australian managers. It was our judgment that the heterogeneous nature of our samples dictated that we measure success in terms of objective data that were relatively easy to collect. Relative salary level for one's age group provided such a measure which was sufficiently accurate for our purposes. We then developed and

cross-validated a value profile key or pattern that was related to success in each of the four countries. The value patterns that were related to success were similar in the four countries and correlated with success as follows: U.S.A. (.32), Australia (.47), India (.35), and Japan (.26). These correlations are of similar magnitude to the validity coefficients generally reported for predicting manager success by other types of predictors. We view these results as solid evidence that value patterns and success are meaningfully related in a similar fashion across the four countries.

Viewing the value-success relationships of American managers provides the following picture. Successful managers favor pragmatic, dynamic, achievement oriented values while less successful managers prefer more static and passive values, the latter forming a framework descriptive of organizational stasis rather than organizational and environmental flux. More successful managers favor an achievement orientation and prefer an active role in interaction with other individuals useful in achieving the managers' organizational goals. They value a dynamic environment and are willing to take risks to achieve organizationally valued goals. Relatively less successful managers have values associated with a static, protected environment in which they take relatively passive roles and often enjoy extended seniority in their organizational positions.

Since the value systems of American managers seem relatively stable over time and since values are related to success, we have explored the possibility of using values as a selection or promotion device in attempting to pick people who will turn out to be successful. The following expectancy table shows the chances out of 100 of a person with a given value score being among the top half of managers in terms of success.

Value Score	*Chances in 100 of Being Among the Top Half of Managers in Terms of Success
Very High (Top 20%)	75
High (Next 25%)	62
Medium (Next 35%)	56
Low (Next 15%)	41
Very Low (Bottom 5%)	25

*Total sample size is 875 managers

Value patterns are predictive of success and could be used in selection and placement decisions. We are hesitant, however, to recommend the use of personal values in selection because we do not know the full consequences of an individual organization having managers with like value profiles. Persuasive arguments can be made that organizational vitality and adaptation to changing social and technological conditions may come about in large part because of the value mix in an organization. There may well be some optimum range of value differences within an organization; we simply do not know what that optimal range is for any given organization.

5. There are differences in personal values of managers working in <u>different organizational contexts</u>. One example of the impact of type of organization upon values is shown when we compare the personal values of U.S. managers with U.S. labor leaders. In general, union leaders have a moralistic orientation while managers are pragmatic. Owners and stockholders represent important values (likely to influence behavior) for managers and weak values (unlikely to influence behavior) for union leaders. Similarly, blue-collar workers and laborers represent important values for union leaders and weak values for managers. As regards organizational goals, employee welfare and social welfare are important values for union leaders and weak values for managers. Just the opposite is true for high productivity, organizational

stability, organizational growth, organizational efficiency, and industry leadership. Finally, ambition, ability and skill represent important values for managers while trust, loyalty and honor are much less important. For union leaders, just the reverse is found. These differences help explain why the two groups approach various issues from conflicting directions. Perhaps it is only recognition of mutual dependence as a fundamental aspect of modern industrial relations that allows cooperation between the groups to result even though it may be, as some writers have suggested, "antagonistic" in nature.

An example where organizational setting does not make a difference is found when we compare Indian managers from the private sector with those from the public sector. Despite the basic differences in setting, there is great similarity between the value profiles of public and private sector managers. The profiles of the two groups correlate .98 and are almost identical. Although this high degree of similarity is surprising, it may result in part because the private sector is a primary source of managerial talent for the public sector and because of the social pressure for public sector firms to view private sector companies as ideals in some respects so as to become viable economic units. These forces may result in public sector managers having values and concerns which are typical of private sector managers.

A final example of the impact of organizational variables upon value systems is found when we look at value differences between managers employed in firms of different size. In an analysis of American, Japanese and Korean managers, we defined large firms as those with 5,000 or more employees, medium size firms as those with 500-4,999 employees and small firms as those with 1-499 employees. In all three countries, there was a general trend of organizational goals being a more important part of managers' value systems in large firms, less so in medium size firms and least important in small firms. This was the case for the goals, high productivity, profit maximization, organizational growth, organizational efficiency, and

industry leadership. There was no relationship between size and the importance of the goals, organizational stability and social welfare. The patterns in each of the three countries were similar and suggest to us that the effects of environmental uncertainty, organizational complexity and conflicting organizational goals in large organizations may explain these findings. One might logically assume that as organizations increase in size, managers are confronted with more difficult, more complex, more ambiguous and more challenging decisions. Communication and interpersonal relationships also become more complex and difficult, and goal clashes become inevitable. The consequences of these management and coordination problems undoubtedly are more challenging in large firms than in small firms and, therefore, influence top managers of large firms to be more aware of organizational goals and to ferret out deviations and to establish systems of controls and incentives which ensures internal conformity with the firm's goals. Managers of small firms emphasized the goal of employee welfare more than did managers of larger firms; this finding is in accordance with observations of many writers about the relative advantages of small firms.

Personal value systems do differ in different organizational contexts in ways that are generally understandable. We do not know, however, whether these differences are largely a function of the type of people who go into certain organizational contexts and/or to what extent people's value systems adapt to the organizational context in which they find themselves.

6. There are both differences and similarities in the value systems of managers in the different countries we have studied. On balance, we are impressed with the similarity of value patterns of managers in countries of diverse social, cultural, and technological settings such as the U.S.A., Japan, Korea, India and Australia. One indication of this similarity is seen when we observe the correlation of value patterns between each pair of countries.

	Japan	Korea	India	Australia	U.S.A.
Japan		.92	.67	.64	.76
Korea			.71	.64	.72
India				.85	.79
Australia					.95

The correlations show that the value patterns of all the country pairs are significantly related. The U.S. and Australia are most similar, Japan and Korea are almost as similar, and India and Australia are quite similar. Korea and Australia, and Japan and Australia are least similar while Japan and India are only slightly more similar. It should be remembered that these are overall country profiles that are being compared and they do not show the individual variation that exists within each country. These data suggest that cultural and social factors as opposed to level of technological development and degree of industrialization are most important in explaining value differences and similarities.

Amidst all of this similarity, there are differences in value patterns between the five countries. A thumbnail sketch of several observations about the values of managers in each country will highlight some of these differences

U.S.A. Managers

-Large element of pragmatism.

-Low importance of political and social values.

-Emphasize traditional organizational goals such as profit maximization, organizational efficiency and high productivity.

Japanese Managers

-Very high element of pragmatism.

-Value magnitude very highly (size and growth).

-Place low value on conflict and its open expression.

-Motivation for work seems more a product of forces external to the organization than internal to the organization.

Korean Managers

-Large element of pragmatism

-Place low value on most employee groups as significant reference groups.

-Low importance of political and social values.

-Low value placed on organizational goals.

Indian Managers

-High degree of moralistic orientation.

-High relevance placed on political values.

-Value stable organizations with minimal or steady change.

-Value personalistic goals and status orientation.

-Value a blend of organizational compliance and organizational competence.

-Place low value on most employee groups.

-Major regional differences in values of managers.

Australian Managers

-High degree of moralistic orientation.

-High emphasis on social and political values

-Place low value on growth and profit maximization.

-Place low value on such concept as achievement, success, competition and risk.

-Major regional differences in values of managers.

7. So what? Our work leads us to the conclusion that the personal values of managers are both measurable and important to measure. Values are related to such practical and important concerns as decision making, managerial success and organizational context differences. While we have learned a great deal about values and their role in organizational life, I am personally struck with how much there is to know. We do not know, for example, how value systems develop and how they are changed by organizational experiences; what are acceptable or optimal levels of

value disparity within organizations or sub-organizations to aid in the achievement of organizational success; what are the effects upon individuals of providing them with valid information about their own value systems; what values are most compatible with movement toward a post industrial era or multi-national corporate life, and finally, how value measurement might aid in the strain toward consistency that all must make between what we believe and value and how we behave. In short, we view the study of value systems and their role in organizational life as an important and on-going venture.

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